Utah State Charter School Board Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2007

North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education

APPROVED

Members present: Julie Adamic, Barbara Killpack, Eric Smith, Scott Smith, Joel Wright and Brian Allen

attending via phone conference.

Members excused: John Pingree

Staff present: Marlies Burns, Gary Belliston, John Taggart, Jeannie Rowland, Melinda Fatani, Natalie

Gordon, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Mark Cluff, Cindy Davis, Susan Soleil, Steve Winitzky, Rob Muhlestein, Janene Bowen,

Tom Pitcher, Paige Anderson

Call to Order

Chair Julie Adamic called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Public Comment

Cindy Davis, a principal at an elementary school in Alpine School District, spoke at a State Board of Education meeting in their public comment portion of the meeting, and was asked to address her concerns to the State Charter School Board. Ms. Davis expressed her concerns with the need of increased accountability with enrollment to reduce some of the negative impact with neighborhood schools. Chair Julie Adamic addressed Ms. Davis' concerns by explaining to her that last legislative session addressed this issue in R277-470-6 – Transfer of Student Criteria. "Charter Schools shall allow students to transfer from one charter school to another and enroll students only consistent with Section 53A-1a-506.5, including timelines." That timeline is March 31st, charter school notification to the parents, the parents have until April 30th to respond to the charter school to inform them of their intent to enroll. After these deadlines, the parent is required to go to the principal of the school the student is leaving to inform them of their intention of leaving that school.

Ms. Davis also expressed her concerns regarding Special Education services. Ms. Davis stated she feels charter schools need to provide teachers with mild/moderate endorsements as well as severe/profound endorsements so the teachers can educate the students with the most severe disabilities as well as the other students. Ms. Davis added the need for paperwork for Special Education students being completed in a timely manner. Chair Julie Adamic informed Ms. Davis that charter schools do participate in UPIPS, and is mandatory, just as it is in any traditional district school.

Another suggestion Ms. Davis shared with the SCSB is to have a mentoring system in place to help new principals and new schools succeed.

Chair Adamic informed Ms. Davis that the SCSB is working on the issues that she presented and will continue to do so.

Introduction of New Charter School Employee

Director Marlies Burns introduced Natalie Gordon to the SCSB. Natalie will be working part-time with the charter school staff and has been working with charter schools for the past year with School LAND Trust issues

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and will be taking on that responsibility as a charter school employee. Director Burns informed the SCSB that hiring Natalie helps the charter school section meet the three employees allowed to be hired with the legislation funds given the section last year.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Member Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2007 State Charter School Board Meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Charter School Board Chair Report

Chair Julie Adamic informed the SCSB that some of the members of the board had lunch with Governor Huntsman. Ms. Adamic thanked Member Scott Smith for initiating that luncheon and felt they were able to inform the Governor of some of the purposes as well as upcoming issues that charter schools face.

Chair Adamic also informed the SCSB that they have been working with Representative Bigelow regarding local levy replacement. Ms. Adamic stated in the last taskforce meeting things went fairly well for charter schools, but there is still not an agreement between both sides. They were given a 'draft' bill that Representative Bigelow put together for both parties to review and come back next month with concerns. Ms. Adamic stated that for the most part, the formula is what is being asked for. They are taking out the judgment levy, the transportation levy, the recreation levy, the basic levy and the reading levy. She stated that she advocated and spoke to the fact that if our students were allowed to participate in the district's athletic associations the charter schools would not need the recreation levy. She also stated Representative Bigelow feels very strongly that charter schools should not receive any form of transportation funds; although special populations and equality issues have been discussed.

Member Joel Wright stated there are allegations and statements that charter schools do not allow everyone to enroll in the schools. Mr. Wright went on to say that the reason charter schools do not take lower income people is because lower income families do not have a second parent in the home, and do not have the means to provide transportation. Mr. Wright stated that if the legislature is concerned about charter schools not enrolling lower income students, it would be beneficial to fund the charter schools in a way to allow additional lower income families to participate in what charter schools have to offer.

Gary Belliston distributed a spreadsheet prepared by Ben Leishman, from the Legislative Fiscal Analyst Office, used to calculate the Local Property Tax Replacement for last year based on the 2005-2006 data. It was stated this formula leaves debt services in, however the districts showed great concern over those funds. Ms. Adamic informed the SCSB that she suggest the state continue to hold the districts harmless for debt services and continue picking up replacement money for debt services. Ms. Adamic stated she feels she would love to keep a good relationship between the charter schools and the districts in which they reside. She went on to say she would hate to see anything interfere with the collaboration and cooperative nature that is starting to develop.

Charter School Board Standing Committee Reports

• Communications Committee-Member Scott Smith stated the Communications Committee has changed their meeting times; they will be meeting every other month (odd months) and will be meeting at 9:00 a.m. to accommodate Superintendent Harrington's schedule as well as other members of the committee.

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that the uniform charter school website application will be a one page application asking for the minimal amount of information to enable a student to be placed on a school's lottery list which would include name of student, date of birth, current grade in school, mailing address, phone number, email address and parent/guardian name. Based on their current grade in school, the website would create a choice of menu options they could apply. Ms. Burns stated USOE's

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computer services section is working on a mock up, so hopefully there will be something next month to practice and sending it out for schools to use by mid November, with the intention it will be pulled off the website February 16th. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB that this method of registration would be online and available in future years, beginning July 1, the beginning of the fiscal year, through the third Friday in February as is outlined in law. Then the charter schools, at which the student applied would do their applications system, their lottery if need be, and no later than March 31st would reply in writing to the student on either their acceptance or what position they are placed on the wait list. The parents or students would have one month, until April 30th to get back a written acceptance or rejection of the spot at the school. Ms. Burns reminded the SCSB that in the law, there is specific dates stated; March 31st the last date for notification from the school to the student and April 30th is the last date of notification from the student to the school. Ms. Burns also stated that when a parent or student applies on line, an automatic email will be sent to every school for which the student applied. A question was raised regarding communication back to the districts. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB if the schools follow this timeline, the latest communication should occur is the first week of May, but there is nothing in the law that gives a timeframe for that communication. Member Joel Wright questioned the possibility of any student that desires to enroll after the March 31st deadline. Ms. Burns stated that there is mechanism in place that allows a district and a charter school to jointly decide that the student can attend, one or the other. The parent would be required to send a written notification to their district school of residence informing their intent to apply to a charter school, the district would have to sign off, giving permission and the student could apply to the charter school. It goes the reverse as well.

Chair Adamic stated that if the school has a waiting list, the school can pull from that waiting list at any time. They do not have to go to the district to get permission to attend the charter school, if the child is actually on a waiting list.

Chair Adamic strongly encouraged charter schools to communicate with the districts of which schools and what grades will be affected.

- Rule Review Committee-Gary Belliston informed the SCSB there was nothing to report from the Rule Review Committee meeting that was held.
- Annual Report Committee-Member Barbara Killpack informed the SCSB they have sent out a new application to all the schools, which is in a different format than the old report, and have had five returned. The schools have been given the deadline of October 15th to get the information back to the committee. Ms. Killpack also informed the SCSB that there needs to be a group picture taken of the board for the report. She suggested having the picture taken at the October Charter School Board Meeting. Ms. Killpack requested Chair Adamic to write an introduction to charter schools for the report and get that introduction to Jeannie Rowland within the month. Ms. Killpack stated it has been very helpful to have Susan Soleil, who has done the report previously, be on the committee. She also thanked all the members of the committee for their help.
- Grants Committee-John Taggart informed the SCSB the committee met and discussed some of the different criteria in the grant and will be going over those in more detail. The committee will be meeting October 18th and November 15th to come up with ideas on how to address and treat progressive growth in charter schools. The committee also discussed incorporating grant training in the grant. Mr. Taggart informed the SCSB the training that was held for the current grant, those schools that attended the training scored 96% on their grant application. Chair Adamic questioned how many schools attended the training. Mr. Taggart informed her that eight schools attended, but the training was available to all schools. The training primarily focused on the new schools that had no familiarity with the grant or grant writing.

Charter School Revolving Loan Subcommittee Update

Gary Belliston informed the SCSB that at the last legislative session the legislature appropriated \$6 million for loans to charter schools for facilities and start-up costs. The subcommittee has met twice, and has an application that has gone to the charter schools with a check list. The first round of applications is due October 1st with a meeting schedule October 9th to review the applications to make recommendations to the State Board of Education. Mr. Belliston stated he had emailed the application to all charter school directors but would have the application posted on the website.

State Charter School Financing Authority Update

Gary Belliston informed the SCSB that the state has stepped in and will allow charters to do the conduit financing through the state instead of having to go through a municipality or a county.

Recognition of District Authorized Charter Schools

Director Marlies Burns reminded the SCSB that in the June Charter School Board Meeting Member John Pingree had asked for suggestions to recognize district chartered charter schools. Ms. Burns questioned the SCSB if they would like the Charter School Staff to continue considering ways for recognizing those districts. She also stated because of Mr. Pingree not being in attendance at this meeting, does the board want to take action now, or wait until they have more input from Mr. Pingree. Ms. Burns suggested options for recognizing those districts; press release, plaque given to the school, a certificate, etc. She also stated Mr. Pingree is impressed specifically with Salt Lake City School District with their chartering of charter schools, but there are other districts in the state that also sponsor charter schools. Member Barbara Killpack suggested waiting for Mr. Pingree, to clarify his thoughts on recognizing districts. Motion was made by Member Joel Wright and seconded by Member Scott Smith to table any action for recognizing district authorized charter schools until next meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Changes to CSP Non-regulatory Guidance Changes Q & A

Director Marlies Burns reminded the SCSB that the changes to the CSP Non-regulatory Guidance had been discussed last month, but there was no action taken because there was no quorum in attendance to take a vote. She again reminded the SCSB those changes were that teacher's children may now receive preference in charter schools, similar to founders children and must be in the percentage the school has outline in their charter. The second change was that an SEA can now receive a start-up grant for a satellite school, as long as they meet certain requirements. Ms. Burns informed the Charter School Staff would like the word "Draft" be removed from the document and be posted on the website as a formal document. She requested the SCSB to approve as presented or to instruct the staff of further changes that need to be made. Motion was made by Member Scott Smith and seconded by Member Barbara Killpack to approve the CSP Non-Regulatory Guidance Document as presented. A question was raised whether a licensed administrator could receive preference as well as a licensed teacher. Ms. Burns clarified that licensed administrators are in CACTUS, but they cannot receive preference because CSP Guidance states "teacher", and not educator. Ms. Burns stated the form would be changed to state "teacher" and not "educator". Member Scott Smith amended his motion to approve the document with the clarification of changing "educator" to "teacher". The motion was seconded by Member Joel Wright. The motion was carried unanimously.

Dissolution of Annual Conference Committee

Member Eric Smith suggested the Annual Conference Committee be dissolved. He stated because the USOE would not be funding the conference next year he feels the Charter School Association should be responsible for the planning of conference. Mr. Smith also stated he had volunteered to be the SCSB liaison to the UAPCS Annual Conference Committee. Motion was made by Member Eric Smith and seconded by Member Scott Smith to dissolve the Annual Conference Committee. Member Joel Wright stated he appreciated Mr. Smith's

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continual involvement with the committee and to have that connection. Director Marlies Burns questioned if the present members of the committee would automatically join the UAPCS committee. Mr. E. Smith answered in the affirmative. The motion was carried unanimously.

Clarification of R277-470-4 - Charter School Orientation and Training

Director Marlies Burns reminded the SCSB that they have made it mandatory that all newly chartered schools attend training during their training year. Ms. Burns stated the SCSB had not differentiated between people who had no experience vs. people who do, and does the board think those people need to come to all the trainings because they are representing a new entity, or should they have a "free pass" from attending because they have done it before and they are doing it again. Also, the SCSB has indicated there is potential for the schools attending the training to receive extra funding. The question was raised whether the school's full board be required to attend, or merely a representative of the school. Member Eric Smith questioned the number of trainings being held. Ms. Burns informed him there are seven trainings held throughout the year focusing on various subjects; board training, how to run an HR program, hiring and firing, financing, etc. After much discussion motion was made by Member Eric Smith and seconded by Member Scott Smith for the remaining five training meetings this year and any training meetings in the future to deduct three points from their application score for each meeting not attended by at least one board member, by phone or in person. The motion was carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Motion was made by Member Scott Smith and seconded by Member Barbara Killpack to move into an executive session to discuss personnel issues. The Board was polled and by unanimous consent of those present the board moved into executive session.

Motion was made by Member Joel Wright and seconded by Member Barbara Killpack to reconvene into open meeting. The motion carried.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Member Scott Smith to adjourn at 2:15 p.m.

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